

03/09/00
JC712 U.S. PTO

03-13-00

UTILITY PATENT APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL

Under Small Entity Status
(New Nonprovisional Applications Under 37 CFR § 1.53(b))

Attorney Docket No.

6425/53530

JC525 U.S. PTO

09/522108

03/09/00

TO THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS:

Transmitted herewith is the patent application of () application identifier or (X) first named inventor, Jeffrey A. Schriebman, entitled Method and Apparatus for Encoding Control Data in a Video Data System, for a(n):

(X) Original Patent Application.

() Continuing Application (prior application not abandoned):

() Continuation () Divisional () Continuation-in-part (CIP)

of prior Application No. _____, filed on _____.

() A statement claiming priority under 35 USC § 120 has been added to the specification.

Enclosed are:

(X) Specification; 26 Total Pages. (X) Informal Drawing(s); 19 Total Sheets containing 17 Figures.

(x) Oath or Declaration:

(x) A Newly Executed Combined Declaration and Power of Attorney:

(x) Signed. () Unsigned. () Partially Signed.

() A Copy from a Prior Application for Continuation/Divisional (37 CFR § 1.63(d)).

() Incorporation by Reference. The entire disclosure of the prior application, from which a copy of the oath or declaration is supplied, is considered as being part of the disclosure of the accompanying application and is hereby incorporated herein by reference.

() Signed Statement Deleting Inventor(s) Named in the Prior Application. (37 CFR § 163(d)(2)).

() Power of Attorney.

(X) Return Receipt Postcard.

() Associate Power of Attorney.

() A Check in the amount of \$_____ for the Filing Fee.

() Preliminary Amendment.

() Information Disclosure Statement and Form PTO-1449.

() A Certified Copy of Priority Documents (if foreign priority is claimed).

(X) Statement(s) of Status as a Small Entity.

() Statement(s) of Status as a Small Entity Filed in Prior Application, Status Still Proper and Desired.

() Other: _____

CLAIMS AS FILED

FOR	NO. FILED	NO. EXTRA	RATE	FEE
Total Claims	49	19	\$9.00	\$171.00
Independent Claims	9	6	\$39.00	\$234.00
Multiple Dependent Claim Fee (if applicable)				\$0.00
Assignment Recording Fee (if applicable)				\$0.00
Basic Filing Fee				\$345.00
Total Filing Fee				\$750.00

Please charge \$_____ to Deposit Account No. _____ pursuant to 37 CFR § 1.25. At any time during the pendency of this application, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees required or credit any overpayment to this Deposit Account. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed for fee processing against this Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

By:

Virginia H Meyer
Virginia H. Meyer, Attorney of Record, Reg. No. 30089

Date: March 9, 2000

Correspondence Address:

Meyer Intellectual Property Law
475 Gate Five Road, Suite 275
Sausalito, CA 94965
Phone: (415) 289-7471
Fax: (415) 331-6068

I hereby certify that this is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 CFR § 1.10 on the date indicated below and is addressed to:

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Box Patent Application
Washington, D.C. 20231

By:

Barbara Steger

Typed Name: Barbara Steger

Express Mail Label No.: EK176504638US

Date of Deposit: March 9, 2000

PTO/SB/09 (12-97)
Approved for use through 09/30/00, OMB 0681-0031
Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

**STATEMENT CLAIMING SMALL ENTITY STATUS
(37 CFR 1.9(f) & 1.27(b)) -- INDEPENDENT INVENTOR**

Docket Number (Optional)
6426/63530

Applicant, Patentee, or Identifier: Jeffrey A. Schriebman

Application or Patent No.: filed concurrently herewith _____

Filed or Issued: _____

Title: Method and Apparatus for Encoding Control Data in a Video Data System

As a below named inventor, I hereby state that I qualify as an independent inventor as defined in 37 CFR 1.9(c) for purposes of paying reduced fees to the Patent and Trademark Office described in:

- ☒ the specification filed herewith with title as listed above.
☐ the application identified above.
☐ the patent identified above.

I have not assigned, granted, conveyed or licensed and am under no obligation under contract or law to assign, grant, convey, or license, any rights in the invention to any person who would not qualify as an independent inventor under 37 CFR 1.9(c) if that person had made the invention, or to any concern which would not qualify as a small business concern under 37 CFR 1.9(d) or a non-profit organization under 37 CFR 1.9(e).

Each person, concern, or organization to which I have assigned, granted, conveyed, or licensed or am under an obligation under contract or law to assign, grant, convey, or license any rights in the invention is listed below:

- ☒ No such persons, concerns, or organizations exist.
☐ Persons, concerns, or organizations are listed below:

Separate verified statements are required from each named person, concern, or organization having rights to the invention averring to their status as small entities. (37 CFR 1.27)

I acknowledge the duty to file, in this application or patent, notification of any change in status resulting in loss of entitlement to small entity status prior to paying, or at the time of paying, the earliest of the issue fee or any maintenance fee due after the date on which status as a small entity is no longer appropriate. (37 CFR 1.28(b))

Mr. Jeffrey A. Schriebman		
NAME OF INVENTOR	NAME OF INVENTOR	NAME OF INVENTOR
<u>Jeffrey A. Schriebman</u>		
Signature of Inventor	Signature of Inventor	Signature of Inventor
<u>MARCH 9, 2000</u>		
Date	Date	Date

Burden Hour Statement: This form is estimated to take 0.2 hours to complete. Time will vary depending upon the needs of the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you are required to complete this form should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, DC 20231. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231.
W:\P\PL1\Schriebman\63530\smallentity.030900.wpd

006600-030900

APPLICATION FOR
UNITED STATES LETTERS PATENT
for

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR ENCODING CONTROL DATA IN A VIDEO DATA STREAM

Inventor

Jeffrey A. Schriebman

RELATED APPLICATION

This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/124,696 filed March 15, 1999.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to closed-captioning and other data appearing on the vertical blanking interval of a video image signal. More particularly, the present invention relates to an apparatus and method for the addition of closed captioning and other control data to a video or television program.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Closed-captioning is the synchronized display of textual data with the underlying video program. In other words, closed-captioning allows a program viewer to see the video image on screen, while simultaneously reading the underlying dialogue instead of having to hear it. Traditional techniques for adding closed-captions to video data require expensive, special-purpose synchronization software and encoder hardware.

The closed-captioning of video programs is typically done in two stages. In the first stage, an enhanced dialog text script is created in a word processor and an association is made between each piece of text and a specific time sequence within the video program during which the text is to be displayed. This synchronization process is typically done by a skilled technician using a computer and associated software to associate a time code to the desired text.

In the second stage, the time-coded closed-caption data is merged with the underlying video program. Prior art methods of merging the closed-captioning and video

image data require the use of dedicated and expensive closed-captioning systems. See Figure 1. These systems include separate hardware, typically referred to as a closed-caption encoder 3. In a typical prior art system, the encoder 3 accepts a video signal from a playback VCR 2 playing a master video tape and simultaneously accepts from a computer 1 the closed captioning instructions created in the first stage. When the encoder 3 recognizes the appropriate time code it formats the associated textual/closed-caption data according to the Electronic Industries Association Standard EIA-608, Recommended Practice for Line 21 Data Service (incorporated by reference herein), and superimposes the formatted data onto the video data stream emanating from the master tape. A record VCR 4 records the output of the encoder. In this manner, the closed-caption data is placed onto line 21 of Vertical Blanking Interval (VBI) of the video data signal by the encoder. The resulting output video tape is designated as a close-captioned encoded submaster video tape.

The U.S. Federal Communications Commission specified through the Television Decoder Circuitry Act of 1990 (Decoder Act) and subsequent FCC legislation that all television receivers imported into the United States or sold in interstate commerce after July 1, 1993 with a screen size greater than 13 inches must be capable of decoding and displaying closed-captions. The Decoder Act and corresponding regulations were put into effect to make closed-captions more readily available to the hearing impaired and to provide the television broadcast industry with an ever expanding base of closed-caption capable television receivers.

From a slow beginning closed-captioned programming has gradually gained momentum to a point where television programming that contains closed-captioning is the norm. Prior to the development of the present invention, a video production house desiring to add closed-captioning to its program had three options. First, the production house could send a master tape of its program with the dialog script to a third-party closed-captioning company. Second, the production house could purchase closed-captioning software and generate the commands required to drive a hardware encoder that is operated by a third-party closed-captioning service. Lastly, the production house could purchase expensive closed captioning equipment and perform the entire closed-captioning process itself.

Faced with this type of up front capital expenditure and the costs of the various

closed-captioning options, it is desirable to find an alternate way of close-captioning a video program. Furthermore, since the use of the vertical blanking interval for the transmission of other control data, such as Content Advisory information and Uniform Resource Locator information in Interactive Television programs, is becoming more widespread, an effective and inexpensive method and apparatus are needed to add such control data to the underlying video image data.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Video programming is increasingly being edited on digital computers. Computer based video non-linear editing (NLE) systems can store in digital form an entire video program. Some digital video editing systems typically store only the image portion of the video program and regenerate the vertical blanking interval (VBI) when displaying video material. However, some non-linear editing systems digitize the last line of the vertical blanking interval and allow storage, editing and playback of that line. For example, certain industry standard digital video editing systems such as the Apple Macintosh based Avid Media Composer series with the Advanced Broadcast Video Board (ABVB) manufactured by Avid Technology, Inc. and the Apple Macintosh based Media 100 series NLE with software Release 5 manufactured by Media 100, Inc. will map a portion of the visual image area of the editing system into the VBI. This mapping occurs near the first line of the visual image so that pictorial data properly positioned near line 1 of the visual image within the editing system can be mapped to the odd and even lines of Line 21 of the VBI of a television signal. The present invention, in one embodiment, takes advantage of the above-mentioned capabilities of these and other non-linear editing systems.

The present invention provides methods and apparatuses for inserting closed-caption and/or other control data into video stream data. One embodiment inserts control data into the vertical blanking interval of a video image data stream without the use of special encoding hardware. One embodiment of the present invention provides a software solution to inserting VBI data service codes onto video programming using non-linear editing system hardware, which many video production houses already possess. One method of the present invention generally comprises generating an image data file including a pixel representation of the desired control data and merging the control image data file with an

underlying program video image data file. Control data is any non-video information normally appearing in the vertical blanking interval, or other non-image portion, of a television signal that is processed by a decoder or controller, including, but not limited to, closed captioning information, Content Advisory information, and Uniform Resource Locator (URL) information.

The apparatus, in one embodiment of the present invention, facilitates input of closed-caption or other control data from a WYSIWYG text editor, other dialog boxes, or external data files containing control data and command directives. Other control data may include, for example, Internet Uniform Resource Locator information used by an Interactive Television controller and Content Advisory information, as well as program name, program type, program length and time-in-show information. This information can be manually entered using the text editor or an on-screen window, or accepted from a preexisting computer text file containing command directives that instruct how and when the data is to appear in the vertical blanking interval of the video signal. From this information, the present invention generates a data structure that temporally arranges the control data as appropriate for further use. In one embodiment, the apparatus creates an image data file which encodes the closed caption information, Content Advisory information and/or Interactive Television Link information. In one embodiment, the present invention generates an image data file comprising a series of visual gray scale representations of the binary codes that represent the Line 21 waveform of the VBI. Of course, the present invention can be applied to other waveform protocols and to other lines of the VBI. According to the present invention, a non-linear video editor of the type described above recognizes the resulting control image data file as standard digital video picture data. Accordingly and in one embodiment, the user merges the control image data file and the video program using standard operations provided by the non-linear video editing system.

In some embodiments, the present invention encodes closed caption information according to the format disclosed in Electronic Industries Association Standard EIA-608, Recommended Practice for Line 21 Data Service. Preferred embodiments of the present invention encode program rating information according to the specifications set forth in the Transport of Content Advisory Information using Extended Data Service (XDS) EIA-744-A,

which is incorporated by reference herein. Lastly, certain embodiments of the present invention encode interactive television link information according to the Transport of Internet Uniform Resource Locator (URL) Information Using Text-2 (T-2) Service EIA-746-A, which is incorporated by reference herein.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is a block diagram of a typical prior art closed captioning system.

Figure 2 illustrates the Line 21 Waveform according to EIA-608 specifications.

Figures 3A, 3B and 3C comprise a flow chart diagram of a process for receiving and placing control data into two data arrays corresponding to Field 1 and Field 2 of Line 21 of the vertical blanking interval.

Figure 4 is a flow chart diagram illustrating a method for generating pictorial representations of the Field 1 and Field 2 packet waveforms of Line 21 using the data contained in the arrays which contain control data.

Figure 5 shows a dialog box called "Control Window" illustrating the various control data input options provided by one embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 6 illustrates a caption window box, which according to one embodiment of the present invention, allows for the entry of one closed caption.

Figure 7 shows a text window box into which command directives have been entered.

Figure 8 shows a dialog box presented by an apparatus according to the present invention which allows for the entry of Television Parental Guideline information.

Figure 9 is a dialog box allowing for entry of Motion Picture Association Guideline ratings.

Figure 10 shows a dialog box providing for the entry of ratings according to the Canadian English Language Rating System.

Figure 11 shows a dialog box providing for the entry of ratings according to the Canadian French Language Rating System.

Figure 12 shows a dialog box that facilitates entry of Program Information.

Figure 13 illustrates a dialog box allowing for entry of Uniform Resource Locator information.

Figure 14 illustrates a dialog box which allows the user to specify the name and address of the output file, as well as whether the resulting picture images containing the gray-scale waveforms will be in a QuickTime movie or PICT file format.

Figure 15 shows a dialog box in which the user sets the lines in the picture images on which the gray scale waveforms will be placed.

Figure 16 illustrates an apparatus embodying the principles of the present invention.

Figure 17 is a flow chart diagram setting forth a method for adding control data to a digital video data stream.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

In the art, data service information, including closed-captions, content advisory information, and Internet Uniform Resource Locator (URL) information, is transmitted simultaneously with the video image itself on the even and odd video fields of Line 21 of the vertical blanking interval of a television signal. Embodiments of the present invention insert control data into data structures whose elements represent points in time or image frames. The data structure is used, in one embodiment, to create a gray-scale, pictorial representation of the Field 1 and Field 2 Line 21 waveforms that include the desired control data. (See Figure 2). The Field 1 and Field 2 gray scale data waveforms are placed into a digital picture image. This allows a non-linear editing system to map the gray-scale waveform onto Line 21 of the vertical blanking interval of the underlying video image data to add the desired control data to the video output. The present invention, however, is not limited to encoding data to Line 21 of the vertical blanking interval and can be used to encode control data on any non-video portion of a video signal. In another embodiment, the control data as temporally arranged in the data structure is used to encode a digital video data stream with closed captioning and other control data.

Figure 16 illustrates an embodiment of the apparatus according to the present invention. As Figure 16 shows, one embodiment comprises video playback and recording device 40 operably connected to computer 20. In the embodiment of Figure 16, computer 20 includes control data input module 22 and scripting module 24. In embodiments used in connection with non-linear editing systems recording analog video streams, computer 20 further includes data file waveform generator 26. In one embodiment, computer 20

includes digital video editing module 30. In another embodiment, digital video editing module 30 can be a device physically separate from, but operably connected to, computer 20. In the embodiment shown, the apparatus also includes keyboard 60 and display device 50 and video monitor 55. Other embodiments may further include other input devices such as a mouse or joystick controlling a pointer displayed on display device 50. In one embodiment, the functionality of the present invention can be incorporated into conventional video editing systems.

Computer 20 can be any computer, special-purpose computing device, or any other suitable device for performing the required functionality. In one embodiment, user computer 20 includes at least one processor, a data storage system (including volatile and non-volatile memory, such as a hard drive), at least one input/output device, such as a floppy disk-drive and/or CD-ROM. In one embodiment, video playback and recording device 40 is a VCR device. However, video playback and recording device 40 can be any suitable device for playing back and recording video stream data or digital video stream data stored on any suitable medium. In addition, the functionality performed by computer 20 may be implemented in hardware or software, or a combination of both. In one embodiment, control data input module 22, scripting module 24, data file waveform generator 26, and digital video editing module 30 comprise executable program code, which when loaded RAM are executed by computer 20.

A. Inputting Control Data

1. User Interface for Inputting Control Data

A first aspect of the present invention is the acquisition of desired control data and its arrangement in a data structure. In one embodiment, control data input module 22 includes functionality providing user interfaces facilitating the input of control data. Figure 5 illustrates a dialog box presented by an embodiment of the present invention which allows the user to choose the form in which control data is inputted. Certain embodiments of the present invention allow for three distinct sources of input: (a) a WYSIWYG editor that allows the user to enter, position and modify one closed-caption (Figure 6); (b) an on-screen portion that allows the user to enter control data and command directives into a computer Window (Figure 7); or (c) an external data file that can contain a list of previously prepared

control data script comprising control data and command directives (see "File" in Figure 5). The external data file can be an ASCII text file or a closed-caption description file prepared by another closed-caption vendor.

5 In one embodiment, the WYSIWYG editor provides for input, screen positioning and editing of closed-caption text. In one preferred embodiment, this is done on a 15 column by 32 row screen matrix. Figure 6 illustrates a caption window where each box represents two character spaces and each half-box represents one character space. Closed-caption characters may have specific colors, or specific attributes such as italic, underline or flash. In one embodiment, attribute information associated with each character is stored together with the character. For this reason, the internal storage of each character in preferred forms of the WYSIWYG editor consists of a 16 bit quantity; 8 bits for the character and 8 bits for its attribute. In addition, as Figure 5 shows, the user may select standard closed-caption display options for use with the closed-caption text to be displayed. More specifically, the user may select "pop-up" or "paint-on" display modes for the closed-caption text, as well as "roll-up 2," "roll-up 3" and "roll-up 4" display modes. In one embodiment, the selection of a particular display mode affects the command and special directives that control entry of control data into the output arrays and, ultimately, how the closed-captioning is displayed on the television screen. (See discussion, below.)

15
20
25 As Figure 5 indicates, embodiments of the present invention also include the ability to generate ratings for the Television Parental Guidelines system, the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) Guidelines system, the Canadian English Language Rating System, and the Canadian French Language Rating System. Certain embodiments feature dialog boxes (see Figures 8, 9, 10 and 11) that allow the user to enter the desired rating information. Other embodiments include dialog boxes that allow the user to generate interactive television links or URLs. (See Figure 13.)

30 In addition, the control data described above can be manually scripted using an on-screen window (Figure 7) or can be contained in a previously prepared external data file containing the closed-caption, Content Advisory information and any other control data. When the on-screen window or an external data file is used, one embodiment parses the command directives to enter the associated control data in the appropriate elements in two

output arrays, described below. In one form, command directives consist of instructions and time code specifications that describe how and when the control data information is to be carried on Line 21 of the VBI. These command directives or instructions allow for the selective and/or appropriate placement in time in the video data stream closed-caption data, content advisory information (e.g., MPA program rating specification), Program Title, Type and Time-In-Show, and Internet Uniform Resource Locator (URL) information (i.e., Interactive Television Link specifications). In one embodiment, these command directives are a language used to instruct the temporal arrangement and storage of control data for later use. In one embodiment, the present invention accepts control data scripts including control data and command directives from third-party systems. In order to interpret and use previously entered closed-caption data using a third-party system, embodiments of the present invention include functionality for parsing third-party scripts comprising control data and command directives to complete the output arrays that are used to create the control data waveforms.

In addition, as Figure 5 indicates, the apparatus of the present invention allows for certain options when the user manually scripts the entry of control data. The "Delay Value" option allows the user to omit the entry of time codes. In this instance, if no time code is specified with a particular command directive or control data, the apparatus assigns a time code for a particular caption according to the delay specified in the Delay Value box. For example, if pop-up or paint-on closed caption displays are used, the Delay Value is the time between successive pop-up or paint-on captions. The apparatus loads each closed-caption into the data arrays, discussed below, according to the delay value, if no time code is specified. Furthermore, if roll-up display is used, the Delay Value represents the time between the display of each line in the roll-up caption.

In addition, the Duration value sets the minimum running time of the output. More specifically, the Duration value allows the specification of an MPAA rating, for example, only once and its placement into the time-points of the data arrays spanning the specified duration. Furthermore, the "Time Code Offset" option allows for the re-mapping of time code values that are beyond the one-hour value into values which the apparatus can use.

2. Data Structures for Storing Control Data

As discussed above, the present invention inserts the inputted control data into a data structure contained in the memory of computer 20. In one embodiment, scripting module 24 parses a control data script containing control data and command directives and inserts control data into a data structure as specified by the associated command directives. In one form, one or more elements of the data structure correspond to a time point or video frame in the underlying video program data.

In one embodiment for use with EIA-608 compliant devices, the data structure comprises two linear arrays of sufficient capacity to store one hour of the Field 1 packet data values and one hour of the Field 2 packet data values, respectively. Of course, any suitable data structure can be used. In NTSC non-drop frame video thirty individual video frames are assigned to each second. Therefore, one hour of video comprises 108,000 (30 x 60 x 60) frames. In drop frame nomenclature this number is slightly less. The EIA-608 standard specifies that two 8-bit characters are to be sent with each of the two field packets of each video frame. The memory required to send Line 21 data for both fields for one hour's worth of video frames is, therefore, (2 x 2 x 108,000) 432,000 bytes. Accordingly, one embodiment of the present invention includes two arrays: one for Field 1 packet data and one for Field 2 packet data. Each pair of data elements in each array corresponds with a particular time code beginning with 00:00:00:00 and ending with 1:00:00:00 (Hours:Minutes:Seconds:Frames).

Figures 3A, 3B, and 3C set forth a method for inserting control data into a data structure of the present invention. In one embodiment, scripting module 24 initializes the odd and even arrays and initializes the odd and even array pointers (Figure 3A, step 100). In one embodiment, the two linear data arrays are filled as follows: If closed-caption input is taken from the WYSIWIG editor (step 102), the appropriate closed-caption data values are generated according to EIA-608 specifications and the FCC Report and Order of April 12, 1991 (FCC 91-119), setting forth the standard control codes for closed-caption decoders, (which is incorporated herein by reference) and placed sequentially into the Field 1 packet data array starting at 0:00:00:00 (step 104). If Content Advisory (Figure 3C, step 138), interactive television links and/or program information (step 142) is specified using the dialog boxes in Figure 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13, data values according to the respective

specifications are generated and placed sequentially into the appropriate data array (steps 140 and 144, respectively). The conversion of control data into the appropriate control codes can occur either when the control data is inserted into the data structure or when pixel representations of the control data are generated. In a preferred embodiment, however, conversion of control data into the appropriate control codes is performed when the control data is inserted into the data structure.

If input is taken from a computer window or from an external file (Figure 3A, step 106), the command directives are parsed and control data is placed into the appropriate Field 1 or Field 2 packet data array at the appropriate time-point (see steps 108-136). The EIA-608 specification, incorporated herein by reference, specifies in which Field certain control data should be placed for embodiments complying with such specifications. In one embodiment, captions and Interactive Television Links are placed first due to their critical timing nature. Next, program rating information and program information are placed into the arrays. In addition and in one embodiment, a user may use the dialog boxes to fill the arrays with Content Advisory or other information and then manually script different Content Advisory or other information to be entered at specific time points and over-write the previously entered data in the control window.

B. Generating Pixel Representations of Control Data

In the embodiment described above, each pair of characters in the respective output arrays (Field 1 and Field 2 packet data) represents the data for one frame at a particular time point that will appear on Line 21 of the VBI. Once all of the data is encoded and inserted into the output arrays, one embodiment of the present invention generates pictorial representations in gray-scale of the Line 21 waveforms for each frame. In one embodiment, the Field 1 and Field 2 packet gray scale data waveforms are placed into a digital picture image that is 720 pixels wide by 486 pixels high. The dimensions of the image frame generated by the invention are not limited by the invention; rather, the dimensions of the image frames depend on the requirements of the media and video editing system. These frames are then merged as part of a multimedia file, such as a QuickTime® file, or stored separately as sequentially-numbered image files, such as PICT files. Of course, any suitable digital image, movie or multimedia file format, such as the AVI file format, can be used in

the present invention.

Figure 4 illustrates an embodiment of a method for generating pixel representations of the control data using the data structure described above. In one embodiment, the user is prompted for the form of the output (Figure 4, step 202). In one embodiment, the user can specify the output as a QuickTime multimedia file or as a series of sequentially numbered image files, such as a PICT file. Next, the pointers for the Field 1 and Field 2 packet arrays are initialized (step 204). If the pointer is not at the end of the Field 1 and Field 2 packet arrays (step 206), data file waveform generator 26 retrieves the control data from the Field 1 and/or Field 2 packet arrays (step 208) and constructs the Line 21 waveforms for that frame (step 214). Specifically, the binary representation of the two control data values from the Field 1 array are encoded into a linear series of pixels. In one embodiment, control data is encoded into a linear series of 720 pixels according to EIA-608 specification, including the Clock Run-In and Start Bits. The resulting pixel representations are, in one embodiment, copied onto at least one line of the output image frame. Next, the binary representation of the two character data values from the Field 2 array are encoded in a similar manner and put onto at least one line of the output image frame. The resulting image file is then converted and output as a QuickTime frame or as a sequentially numbered file in PICT image format (step 216). Of course, any suitable file format, such as the AVI file format, can be used. This process is repeated until the pointer is at the end of the data arrays. (See Figure 4, steps 220, 206, and 222.)

In one embodiment, when the user specifies a multimedia output (step 202), such as a QuickTime file or other file format that supports references to previous frames, data file waveform generator 26 determines whether the control data for the current frame has been used in a previous frame (step 210). If so, data file waveform generator 26 builds a reference to the previous video frame (step 212).

To be used by currently available television systems, the Field 1 and Field 2 packet waveforms must adhere to the standards set forth in Reference EIA-608. See Figure 2. Starting with the Clock Run-In Bits and Start Bits, a gray scale representation of the waveform shown in Figure 2 is constructed. Typically, some non-linear editing systems strip off the H Sync and Color Burst portions of the Line 21 waveform. Accordingly, those

portions of the Line 21 waveform need not be recreated in the gray-scale waveform in
embodiments that are used in conjunction with such NLEs. As more fully described below,
gray-scale bit representations of the control data stored in the two output arrays are placed
into the gray-scale waveforms according to EIA-608 Line 21 specifications. See Segment E of
Figure 2. In one preferred embodiment, for each frame, the Field 1 packet waveform is
created on both lines 1 and 482 of a picture image, while the Field 2 packet waveform is
placed on lines 2 and 483. The rest of the picture image corresponding to each frame is set
to black (zero gray-scale value).

In some embodiments, in order to create Line 21 waveforms that a non-linear editing
system will properly convert into data readable by a closed-caption decoder or other
decoder, the software must replicate the horizontal spacing of the Line 21 waveforms as it is
digitized by the particular non-linear editing system that will be used to merge the video and
control data. The horizontal spacing of the Line 21 waveform has been found to differ
among computer video editing system vendors but appears to be the same within a specific
vendor's hardware line. For example, the mid-point of the maximum value of first Clock
Run-In cycle is located at pixel 35 for an Avid video NLE system with the Avid Broadcast
Video Board (ABVB) hardware board set. The Apple Macintosh based Media 100 video NLE
system with software Release 5 places the midpoint of the maximum of the first Clock Run-
In cycle at pixel 26. The pixel-column positions associated with the Clock Run-In, Start Bits
and Character Bits can be determined for any non-linear editing system by digitizing a
known reference signal containing closed caption data in a digital non-linear editing system
and examining the picture line corresponding to Line 21 of the digitized signal. An inverse
computer software algorithm can then be created to replicate the horizontal spacing of the
Clock Run-In, Start Bits and Character Bits for that particular editing system.

Similar to the horizontal spacing of the gray-scale waveform discussed above, the
gray-scale data values of the waveform, in some embodiments, must be configured to
achieve the appropriate luminance levels (measured in IRE units). It is important to
determine the gray-scale data value that causes the NLE system output to have a video level
of 50 IREs, according to EIA-608 specifications. Of course, different specifications may
require different IRE levels. This gray-scale data value is the gray scale value for the pictorial

representation of the waveform. For example, when using an AVID system, the gray-scale value of 30,000 for 16-bit gray scale achieves a 50 IRE level. The minimum gray scale value is set to zero. The gray-scale data values along the pixel points in the waveform vary between this maximum and minimum according to the EIA-608 specification. See Figure 2. More specifically, the gray scale image is created by first determining the relative intensity of the pixel that is needed at a given location to create the desired EIA-608 specification IRE level and then by inserting that data value into the red, blue, and green components of the pixel.

To allow for different techniques for merging the images containing the pixel representations of the control data and the underlying video data, in one embodiment, the resulting pixel representations of the control data in the Field 1 packet array are copied onto line 0 and line 482 of the output image. The binary representation of the two character data values from the Field 2 array are encoded in a similar manner and put onto line 1 and line 483. However, different NLEs from the same or other manufactures may require that the Field 1 and Field 2 packet waveforms be placed on different rows of the picture image, because the hardware mapping from a row of the picture image to Line 21 of the VBI varies among NLE manufacturers and NLE systems. For example, it has been found that, when using an NLE system including the Avid Media Composer with an ABVB set, the Line 21 waveforms must be mapped on lines 0 and 482 for the Field 1 waveform and lines 1 and 483 for the Field 2 waveform. A non-linear editing system that includes the Media 100 release 5 software for the Macintosh platform requires that the Field 1 waveform be placed on lines 1 and 481 and that the Field 2 waveform be placed on lines 2 and 482. In addition, the duplication of the waveform on different lines in the picture image is not essential to the practice of the present invention. Rather, as described below, the placement of duplicate waveforms allows for use of different editing techniques to merge the video data file with the control data image file.

As discussed above, when output is requested the apparatus fills the two linear data arrays and then generates either multimedia or movie file or sequentially numbered image files from these arrays. This resulting video image file(s) is(are) then imported into a video non-linear editing system and placed on that system's editing time line. The data contained

within the imported file is then combined with the underlying video material using the video NLE system. In one preferred form, combining the imported data with video program material within the video NLE system can be accomplished with a Picture-In-Picture effect or with an Alpha channel image. Of course, other techniques such as image cropping could be used.

The PIP effect is used to position the Line 21 data value line contained within the imported control data image onto an image line within the video NLE system that will be mapped onto Line 21 of the VBI on output. For the Avid video NLE, the PIP effect is used to position data lines 482 and 483 of the control data image to the top of the underlying video image. The remainder of the control data image physically above lines 482 and 483 in the PIP lies beyond the mappable regions of the non-linear editing system and, thus, do not merge in the resulting video. On a Macintosh based Avid Media Composer NLE system running Version 7 Avid Software, the Size Parameter of the PIP should be set to 100 percent and the Vertical position should be set to -991. In one embodiment, the resulting merged video data file is output to a video playback and recording device 40, such as a VCR, which records the encoded video data.

An alternate method of combining the imported control data with video material is through the use of an alpha mask image. Typically, the pixel positions in the alpha mask that are white, a 255 luminance value, allow the imported image to be output and pixel positions that are black, a 0 luminance value, allow the program video material to be output. For this operation on an AVID NLE system, for example, the gray scale lines that are located on row 0 and row 1 in the picture image of the imported file are used by the NLE system. The alpha channel mask is configured to select these two rows.

C. Digital Video (DV) formats

Embodiments of the present invention also encode control data into digital video file formats, such as video data stored on helical-scan digital video cassettes. Unlike analog video data streams, digital video data streams do not include a vertical blanking interval. Rather, the digital video data stream includes video, audio, and auxiliary data portions for each frame in repeating succession. Accordingly, the digital video player constructs each

frame including the vertical blanking interval as part of the streaming analog signal, which is output during playback of the digital video data stream.

According to the invention, binary representations of control data as contained in the data structure, rather than pixel representations described above, are inserted into the auxiliary portions of the digital video data stream. In one embodiment, control data is inputted into the system. In one embodiment, the control data is converted into the appropriate byte code representations and temporally arranged in a data structure comprising Field 1 and Field 2 packet data arrays, as described above. The control data information within the data structure is then merged with the underlying digital video data file.

One embodiment of the present invention employs the data structures and methods of inserting control data into such data structures, described above. (See Figures 3A, 3B, and 3C, as well as related description). Unlike the embodiment described above, however, computer 20 does not include data file waveform generator 26 that generates pixel representations of control data. Rather, computer 20 includes a module that inserts control data from the data structure into the digital video data stream according to the standards and protocols required by the digital video format being used. For example and in one embodiment, control data is merged according to the protocols specified in International Standard International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) 61834, parts 1-5, of Helical-Scan Digital Video Cassette Recording System Using 6,35 mm Magnetic Tape for Consumer Use (1st Ed. 1998), which is incorporated herein by reference, and is available at "<http://www.iec.ch/>."

Figure 17 illustrates an embodiment of a method for inserting control data into a digital video data stream. In one embodiment, digital video data is loaded and processed on a frame-by-frame basis in computer 20 where the control data is inserted into the copy of the data file corresponding to a frame stored in RAM. The data file corresponding to the frame can then be output to a computer readable medium such as a digital video cassette or stored in a digital video data file resident on the hard drive of computer 20. In one embodiment, the pointers for the Field 1 and Field 2 packet arrays are initialized (step 302). If the pointer is not at the end of the Field 1 and Field 2 packet arrays (step 304), a data file

module retrieves the control data from the Field 1 and/or Field 2 packet arrays (step 306) and inserts the control data into the auxiliary data portion of the digital video data stream at the appropriate frame or time point (step 308). In one embodiment, the digital video data file is further edited to ensure that the control data is compatibly merged (step 310), such as changing checksum values to reflect the addition of control data. The changes required to the digital video data file depend on the digital video file format being used. For example, the International Standards, discussed above, describes the changes required to add data to the auxiliary data portion of the digital video data file. This process is repeated until the pointer is at the end of the data arrays. (See Figure 17, steps 312, 304, and 322.)

Although embodiments have been described as implemented on an Apple Macintosh computer, porting the software algorithms to other computer architectures, such as the Intel based PC architecture, and using PC data and extensions to the AVI file format similar to QuickTime, for example, is straightforward. Moreover, the present invention is not limited to the file formats described above. Use of other file formats, such as JPEG, TARGA, TIFF, among others, are also capable of being implemented in the present invention. Although the use of only two video non-linear editing systems, one from Avid Technology and one from Media 100, have been described, the present invention, is easily adapted to any hardware device that can output an array of data storage elements to a line or lines of the vertical blanking interval.

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for encoding control data in a video data stream, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) generating an image data file comprising pixel representations of desired control data;

b) merging said image data file with an underlying video data file to produce a master video data file.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of

c) recording said master video data file on a suitable storage medium.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein said storage medium is a video cassette.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein said image data file is merged with an underlying program video data file using a non-linear video editing system.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein said pixel representation of desired control data spans across one horizontal line of video information.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein said pixel representation of desired control data comprises at least two lines of video data.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein said pixel representation further includes an initialization sequence.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein said pixel representations generated in step (a) are added to the vertical blanking interval of said master video data file.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein said pixel representations generated in step (a) are added to Line 21 of the vertical blanking interval of said master video data file.

5 10. A method for encoding control data in a video data stream, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) inputting control data;
- (b) generating a pixel representation of said control data; and,
- (c) adding said pixel representation of said control data to said video data stream.

10 11. The method of claim 10 wherein said video data stream includes a vertical blanking interval, and wherein said pixel representation of said control data is added to the vertical blanking interval of said video data stream.

15 12. A method for encoding control data in a video data stream, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) inputting control data and command directives;
- (b) inserting said control data in a data structure according to said command directives, wherein elements of said data structure represent time points; and,
- (c) merging said control data with an underlying video data stream, wherein the arrangement of said control data in said data structure controls at least in part said merging step (c).

20 13. The method of claim 12 further comprising the step of:

- (d) converting said control data into byte code representations according to a predetermined specification, before said merging step (c).

25 14. The method of claim 13 wherein said video data stream is a digital video data stream; and wherein said merging step (c) comprises

(c1) inserting said control data converted in step (d) in said digital video data stream;
and, (c2) editing said digital video data stream to accept said control data inserted in step
(c1).

5 15. The method of claim 14 further comprising the step of
(c3) storing said digital video data stream edited in step (c2) on a suitable storage
medium.

10 16. The method of claim 15 wherein said suitable storage medium is a digital video
cassette.

17. The method of claim 14 further comprising the step of
(c3) transmitting said digital video data stream edited in step (c2).

15 18. The method of claim 14 wherein said control data inserted in step (c1) is inserted into
the auxiliary data portion of said digital video data stream.

19. The method of claim 13 wherein said video data stream is an analog video data stream;
and wherein said merging step (c) comprises

20 (c1) generating a sequence of image frames comprising pixel representations of said
control data converted in said step (d); and,

(c2) merging said sequence of image frames with said analog video data stream.

25 ~~20/~~ A method for encoding control data in a video data stream, said method comprising the
steps of:

(a) inputting a control data script, said control data script comprising command
directives and control data;

(b) inserting said control data in a data structure according to said command
directives, wherein elements of said data structure represent time points; and,

(c) for at least one element in said data structure, generating an image frame comprising a pixel representation of corresponding control data.

21. The method of claim 20 further comprising the step of

(d) merging said image frame with an image frame in said video data stream.

22. The method of claim 21 wherein said pixel representation is a gray-scale pixel representation.

23. The method of claim 21 wherein said merging step (d) comprises adding said pixel representation to the vertical blanking interval of an image frame in said video data stream.

24. The method of claim 22 said merging step (d) comprises adding said pixel representation to the vertical blanking interval of an image frame in said video data stream.

25. The method of claim 20 wherein said data structure comprises an array.

26. The method of claim 20 wherein said data structure comprises two parallel arrays.

27. The method of claim 26 wherein the elements in said parallel arrays correspond to the image frames in said video data stream.

~~28.~~ A method for encoding control data in a video data stream, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) inputting a control data script, said control data script comprising command directives and control data;

(b) inserting said control data in a data structure according to said command directives, wherein elements in said data structure represent time points; and,

(c) for each element in said data structure, generating an image frame comprising a pixel representation of the corresponding control data.

29. The method of claim 28 further comprising the step of
(d) for each of said image frames generated in step (c), merging said image frame with
a corresponding image frame in said video data stream.

5 30. The method of claim 29 wherein said pixel representation is a gray-scale pixel
representation.

31. The method of claim 29 said merging step (d) comprises adding said pixel
representation to the vertical blanking interval of an image frame in said video data stream.

10 32. The method of claim 29 said merging step (d) comprises adding said pixel
representation to the vertical blanking interval of an image frame in said video data stream.

15 33. The method of claim 28 wherein said data structure comprises an array.

34. The method of claim 28 wherein said data structure comprises two parallel arrays.

20 35. The method of claim 34 wherein the elements in said parallel arrays correspond to the
image frames in said video data stream.

36. The method of claim 28 further comprising the step of converting said control data
according to a predetermined specification before performing the generating step (c).

25 37. A method for adding control data to underlying video data, said method comprising the
steps of

(a) generating an image data file comprising a sequence of picture images, said
picture images including a pixel image representation of desired control data;

(b) merging said image data file with an underlying program video data file to
produce a master video data file.

38. An apparatus for encoding control data in a video data stream comprising:
a user interface facilitating input of control data;
means for generating a pixel representation of said control data.

39. The apparatus of claim 38 further comprising
means for adding said pixel representation of said control data to said video data stream.

40. An apparatus according to claim 38 wherein said generating means generates pixel representations of control data according to a predetermined specification.

41. The apparatus of claim 38 wherein said user interface facilitates input of command directives, and wherein said apparatus further comprises:
a computer readable memory including a data structure, wherein elements of said data structure represent time points;
processing means for inserting said control data in said data structure according to said command directives; and,
wherein said generating means generates an image frame comprising a pixel representation of the corresponding control data.

42. The apparatus of claim 38 wherein said user interface facilitates entry of an external data file comprising control data and command directives.

43. An apparatus for encoding control data in a video data stream, said video data stream including a vertical blanking interval, comprising:
a video editing device, wherein said video editing device maps at least one line of the vertical blanking interval of a video signal;
a user interface facilitating input of control data and command directives;
a computer-readable memory, said computer readable memory storing said control data and command directives;

processing means associated with said memory for generating pixel image representations of said control data;

wherein said video editing device merges said pixel representations of said control data with an underlying video data stream according to said command directives.

5

44. The apparatus of claim 43 wherein said video editing device maps said pixel representations of said control data to a line in the vertical blanking interval of said video data stream.

10

45. The apparatus of claim 43 wherein said memory includes a data structure, and wherein said processing means further stores said control data in said data structure according to said command directives.

15

46. The apparatus of claim 45 wherein elements in said data structure correspond to image frames in said video data stream.

20

~~47.~~ An apparatus for encoding control data to video data stream, said video data stream including a vertical blanking interval, comprising:

video editing means for mapping video data;

wherein said video editing means maps at least one line of the vertical blanking interval of said video data;

first video image storage means associated with said video editing means for storing the video data;

a user interface facilitating input of control data and command directives;

25

a computer-readable memory, said memory storing said control data and said command directives;

processing means associated with said input means and said memory for generating a sequence of image frames, at least one of said image frames comprising a pixel representation of said control data;

wherein said video editing means is coupled to said first video image storage means and said processing means for merging said sequence of image frames with said video data.

48. The apparatus of claim 47 further comprising means for converting said control data into byte code representations of said control data.

49. The apparatus of claim 47 wherein said processing means generates said sequence of image frames according to said command directives.

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR ENCODING CONTROL DATA IN A VIDEO DATA STREAM

Abstract of the Disclosure

5 Methods and apparatuses for inserting closed-caption and/or other control data into the vertical blanking interval of a video image data stream without the use of special encoding hardware.

C:\MarkWrk\Schriebman\53530\53530us.fld.wpd

1/19

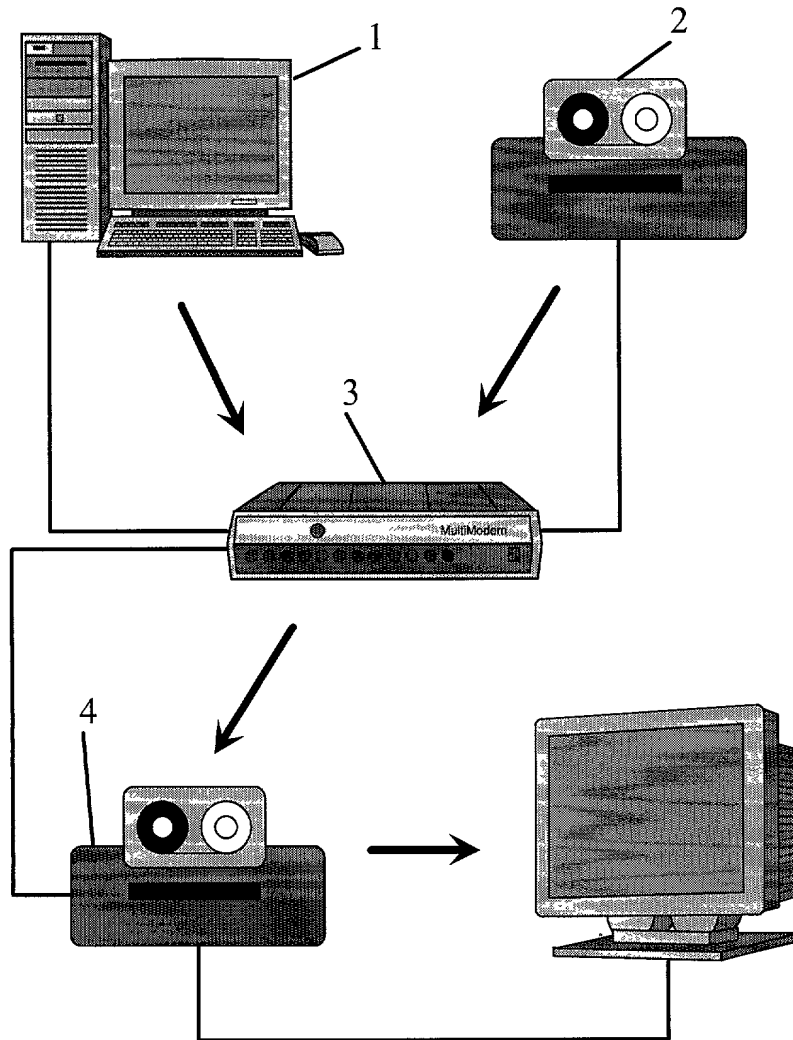


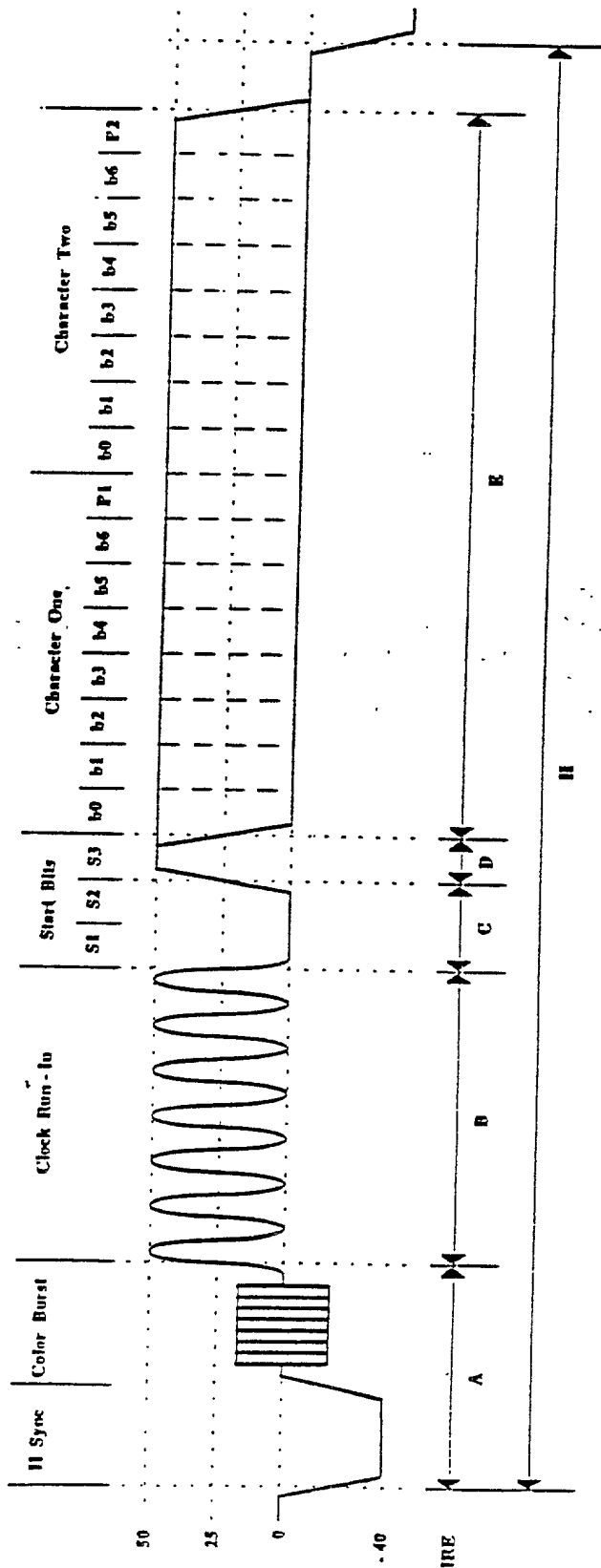
Figure 1

2/19

LINE 21

LINE 21 WAVEFORM DIAGRAM

FIGURE 2

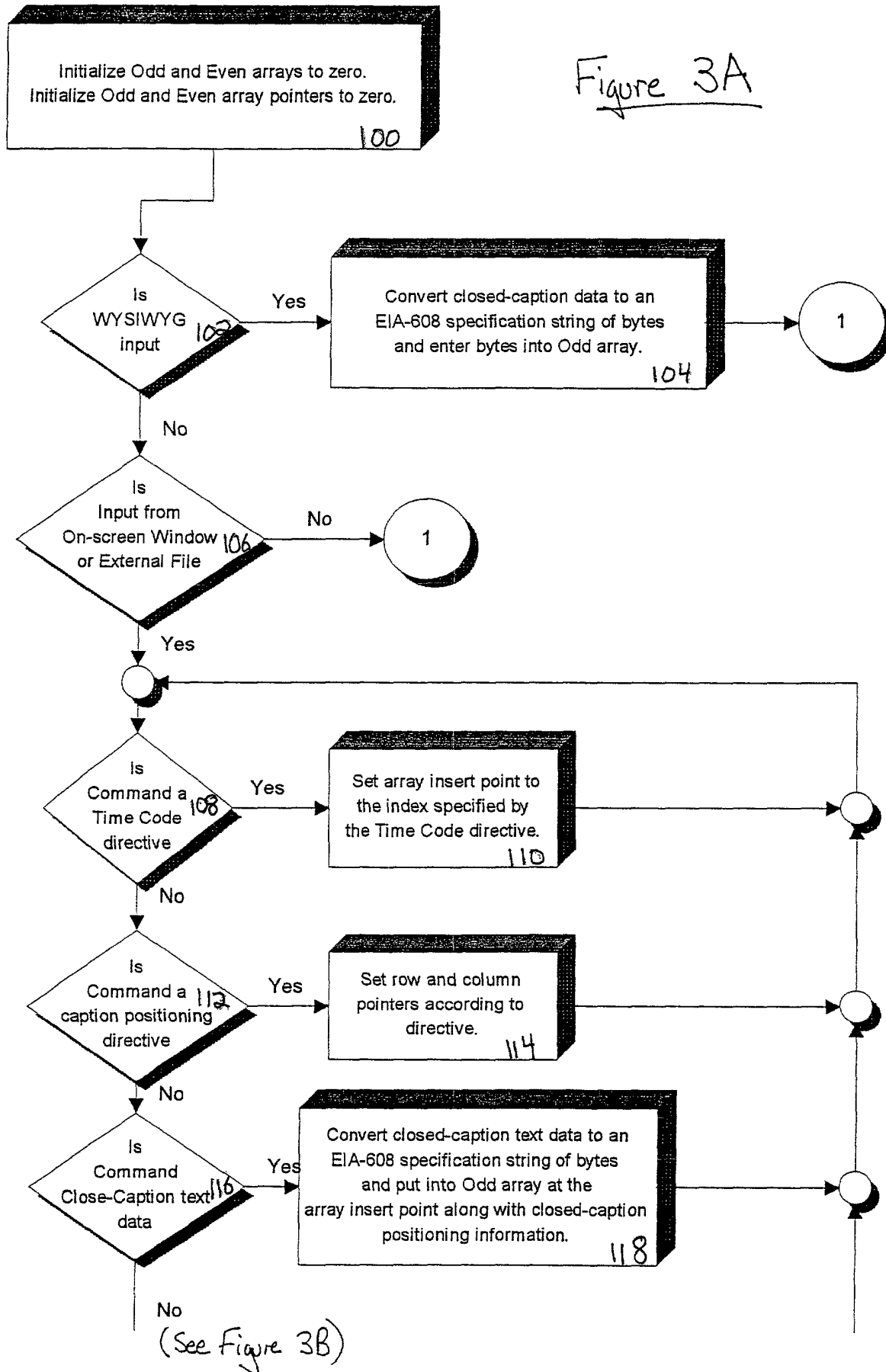


NOTES:

- 1) All interval measurements are made from the midpoints (half amplitude) on all edges.
- 2) If only one of the two fields is being encoded, the other field shall not be altered.
- 3) If both fields are to be encoded, each field shall be encoded within the tolerances specified in table 1. The transmission channel between the encoder output and the decoder input shall not change the difference in the amplitudes of corresponding signal parameters between the two fields by more than 5 IRE.
- 4) Deviations introduced anywhere in the signal due to source generated switching transients shall be no greater than ± 2 IRE. However, decoders should accept larger deviations which may be introduced by passing the signal through a transmission channel and/or signal security system.

3/19

Figure 3A



006000" 80T22550

4/19

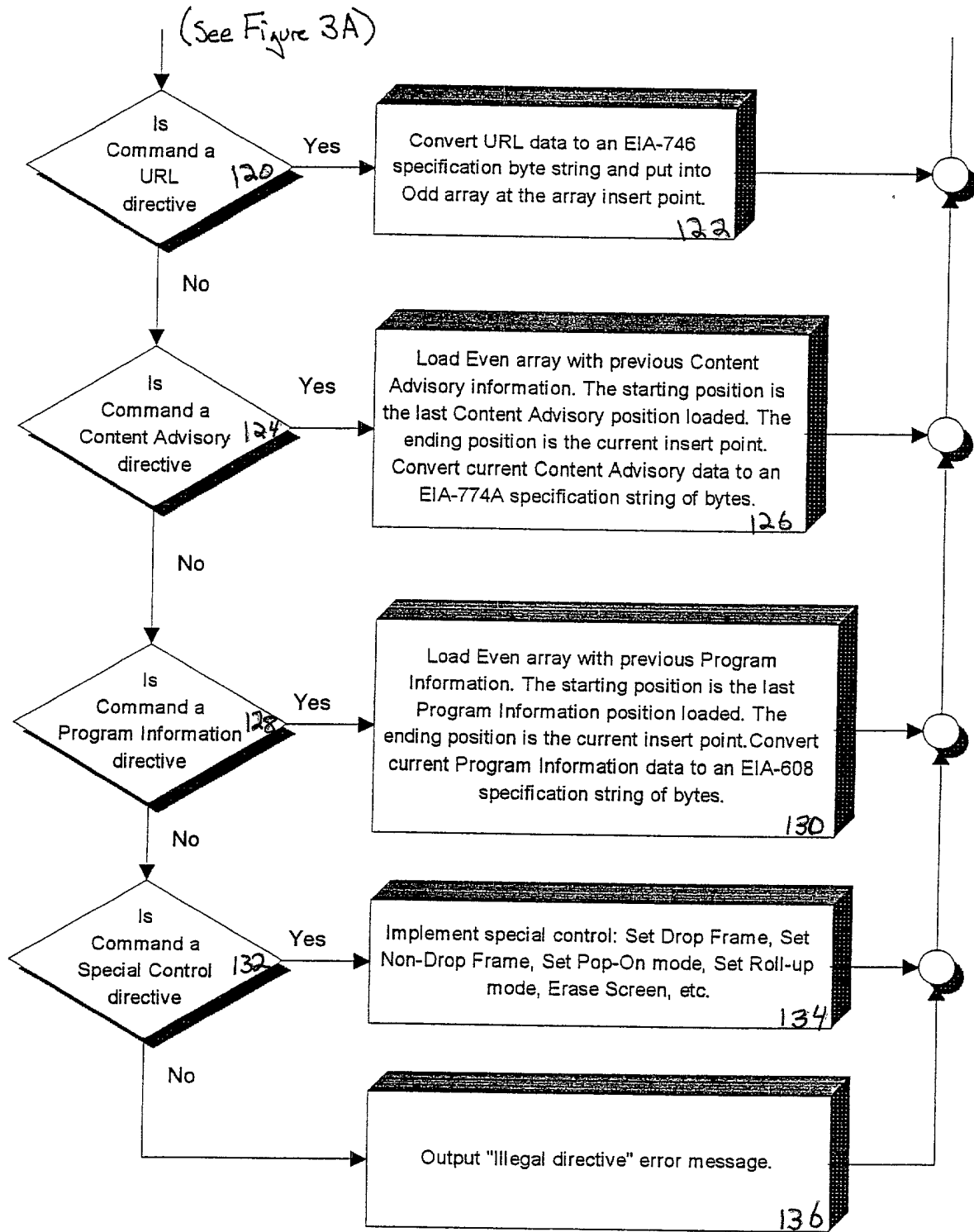


FIGURE 3B

5/19

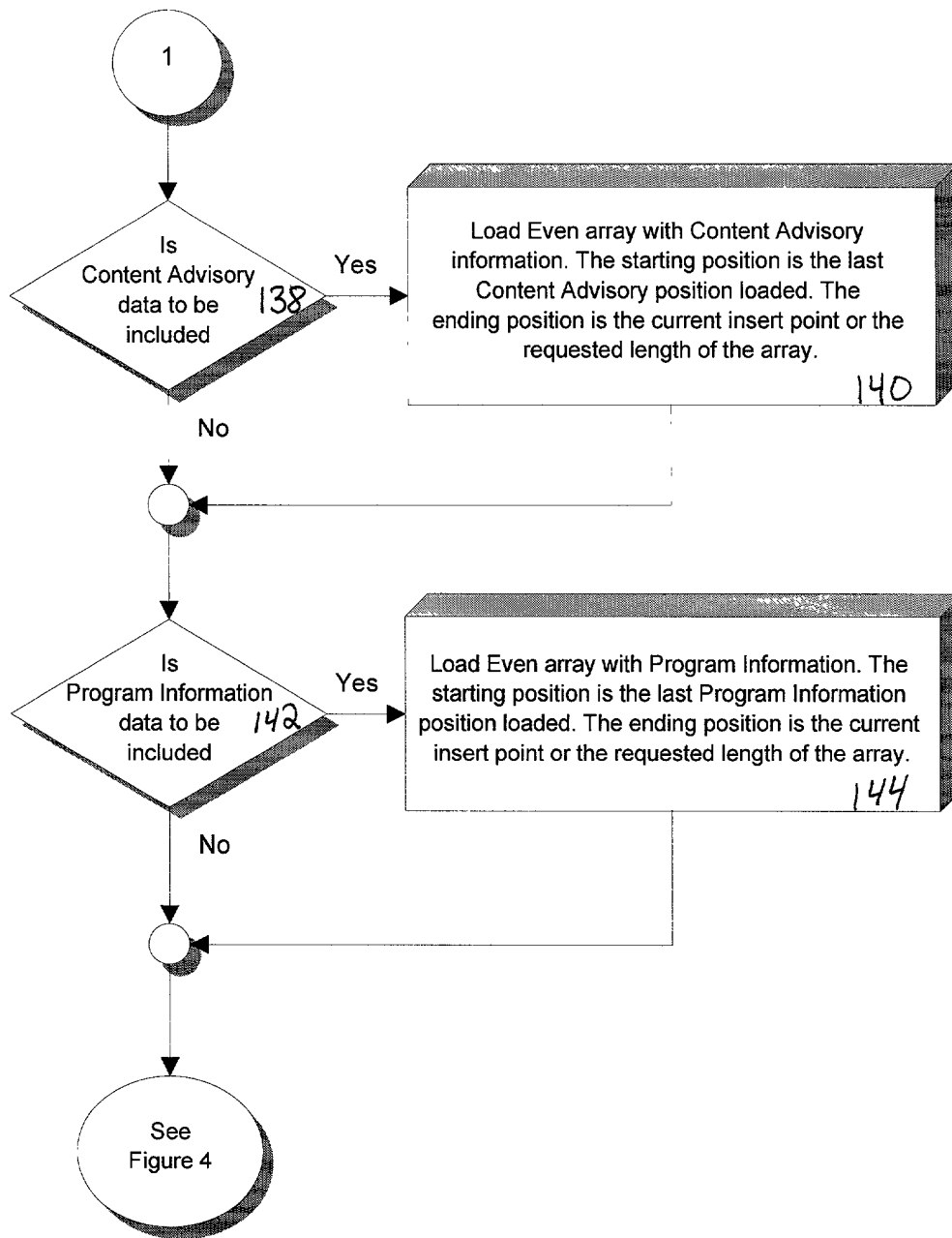


FIGURE 3C

6/19

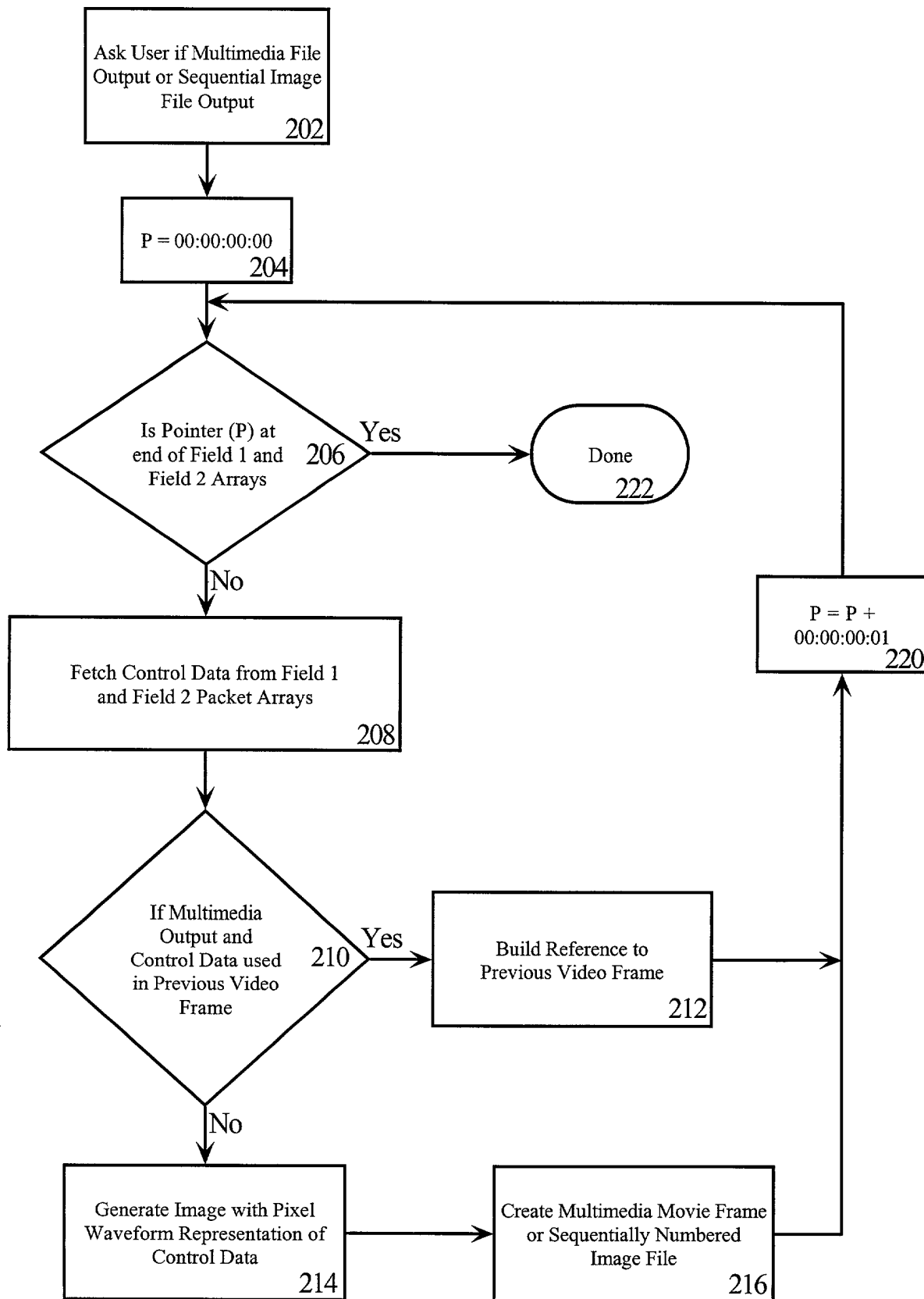


Figure 4

7/19

0060E0"80T22560

Control Window

☒ **Input Source**
☐ Caption Window
☐ Pop-up ☐ Paint-on ☐ RU2 ☐ RU3 ☐ RU4
☐ Text Window
☒ File "Sample 11"

☒ **Include Rating Information**
☒ Parental Guide
☐ MPAA
☐ Canadian English
☐ Canadian French
Current rating: TV-PG S

☒ **Include Program Title, Type, Length, and Time-In-Show**

☒ **Delay Value**
☒ **Duration**
☒ **Time Code Offset**
☐ **Verbose**

FIGURE 5

8/19

005050" 8072560

Caption Window

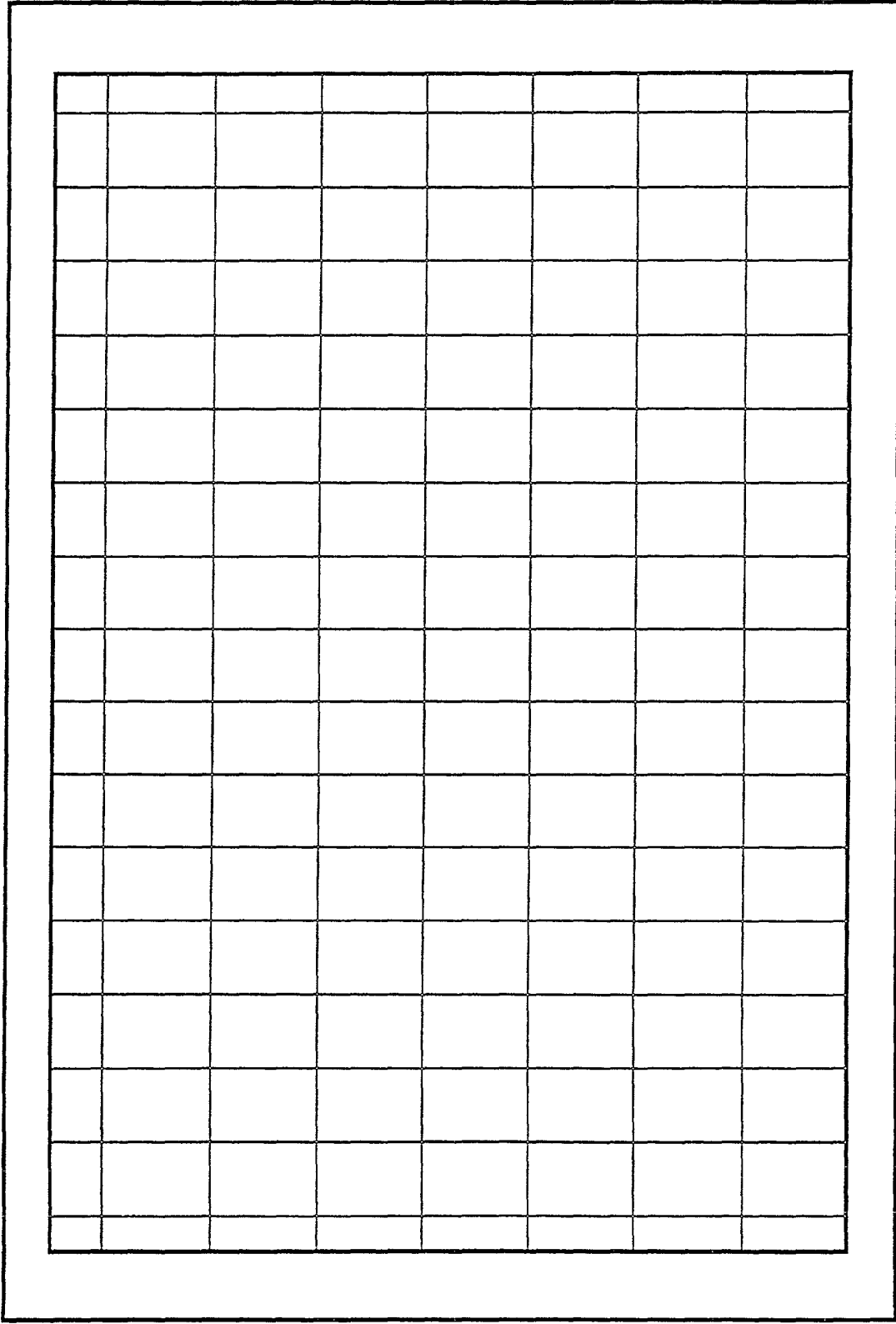


FIGURE 6

9/19

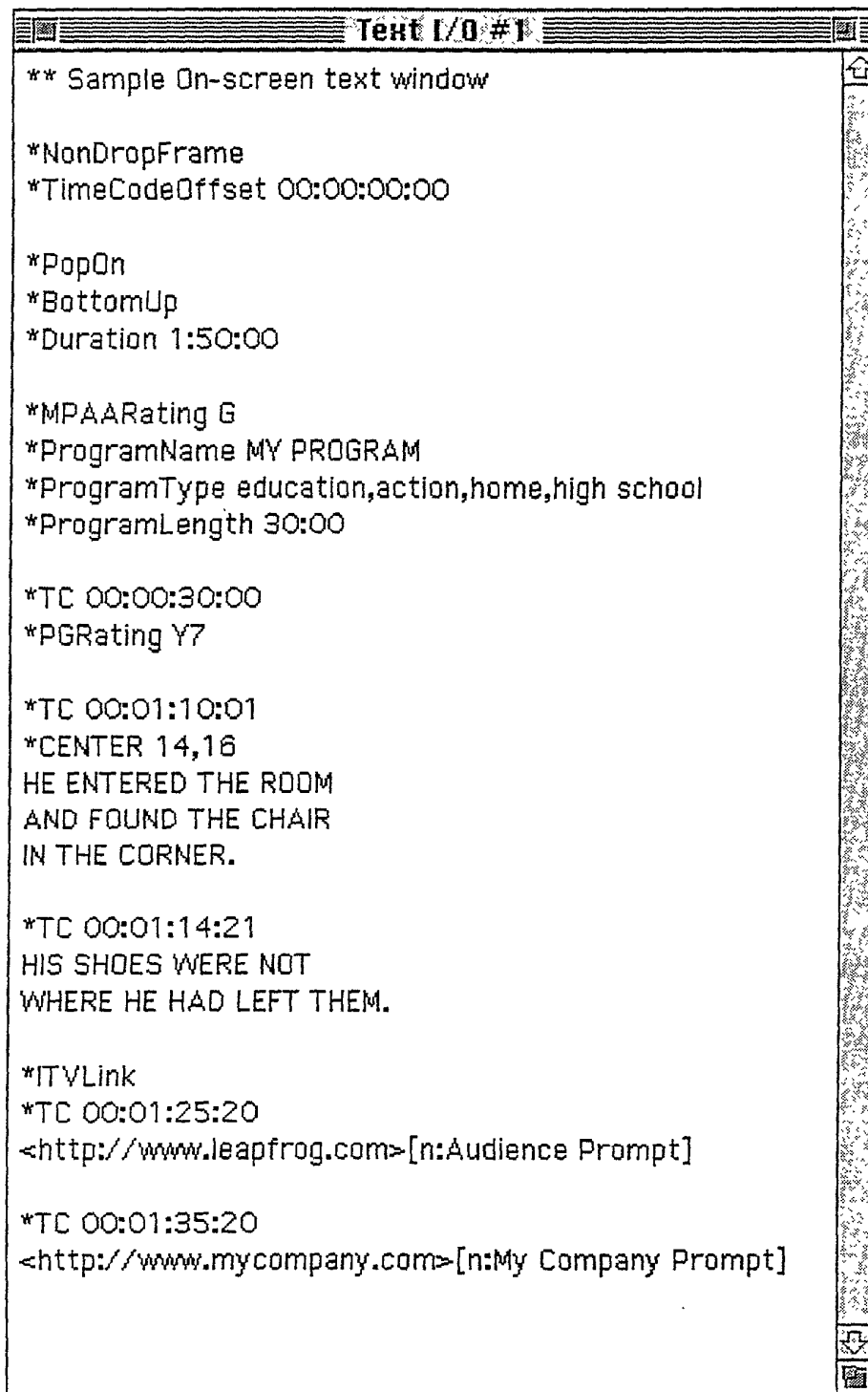


FIGURE 7

10/19

Television Parental Guidelines

	FV	U	S	L	D
TV-MR <input type="radio"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
TV-14 <input type="radio"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TV-PG <input type="radio"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TV-G <input type="radio"/>					
TV-Y7 <input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
TV-Y <input type="radio"/>					
none <input checked="" type="radio"/>					

FIGURE 8

11/19

Motion Picture Association Guidelines

☐ NR Not Rated

☐ R Mature Adult Content

☐ NC-17 No One 17 And Under Admitted

☐ R Restricted

☐ PG-13 Parents Strongly Cautioned

☐ PG Parental Guidance

☐ G General Audience

☒ N/A Not Applicable

FIGURE 9

006020" 80122560

12/19

0060E0" 80T22560

Canadian English Language Rating System

- ☐ 18+ Adult Programming
- ☐ 14+ Viewers 14 years and older
- ☐ PG Parental Guidance
- ☐ G General Programming
- ☐ C8+ Children eight years and older
- ☐ C Children
- ☐ E Exempt

FIGURE 10

13/19

Système de classification français du Canada

☐ 18 ans + Cette émission est réservée aux adultes

☐ 16 ans + Cette émission ne convient pas aux moins de 16 ans

☐ 13 ans + Cette émission peut ne pas convenir aux enfants de moins de 13 ans

☐ 8 ans + Général - Déconseillé aux jeunes enfants

☐ G Général

☐ E Exemptées

FIGURE 11

14/19

Name

Length

Hours

Min

none

none

Other

Sports

Religion

News

Movie

Entertainment

Education

Basic Keyword Group

Detail Keyword Group (0 detail items, 8 total)

Action

Concert

Football

Consumer

Foreign

Contemporary

Fund Raiser

Crime

Game/Quiz

Dance

Garden

Documentary

Golf

Drama

Government

Elementary

Health

Erotica

High School

Exercise

History

Fantasy

Hobby

Farm

Hockey

Fashion

Home

Fiction

Horror

Food

Information

Instruction

Nature

Internat...

Police

Interview

Politics

Language

Premiere

Legal

Prerecorded

Live

Product

Local

Professional

Math

Public

Medical

Racing

Meeting

Reading

Military

Repair

Miniseries

Repeat

Music

Review

Mystery

Romance

National

Science

Series

Service

Shopping

Soap Opera

Special

Suspense

Talk

Technical

Tennis

Travel

Variety

Video

Weather

Western

Clear Keywords

Cancel

OK

OK

FIGURE 12

15/19

Interactive Television Link Generator

URL

Type ☒ none ☐ network ☐ sponsor
☐ program ☐ station ☐ operator

Name

Expires Year Month Day
Hour Min TZ

Script

View ☐ TV ☒ Web ☒ Abbreviated

FIGURE 13

16/19

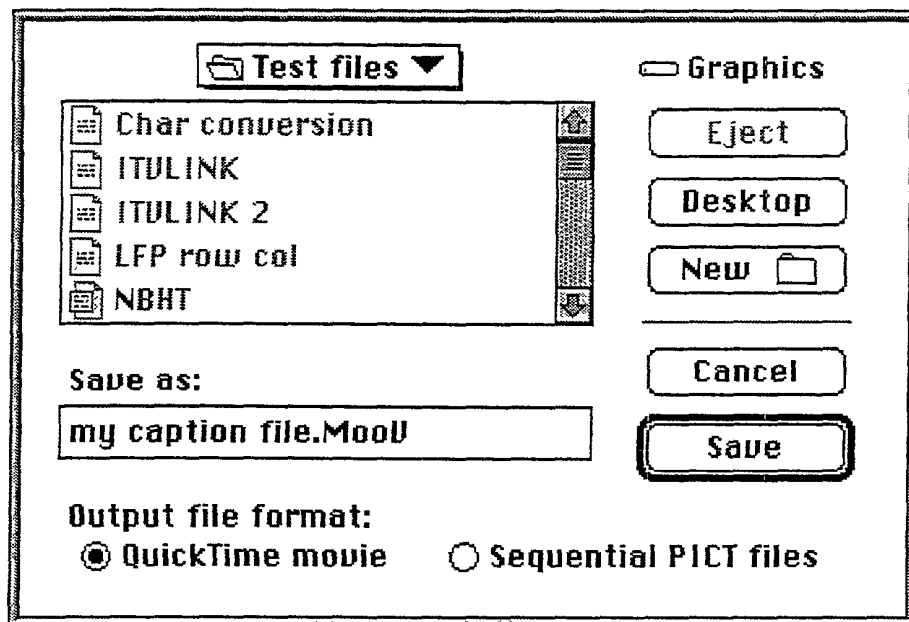


FIGURE 14

17/19

Primary Row

Secondary Row

Starting Col.

☒ Small QuickTime

FIGURE 15

18/19

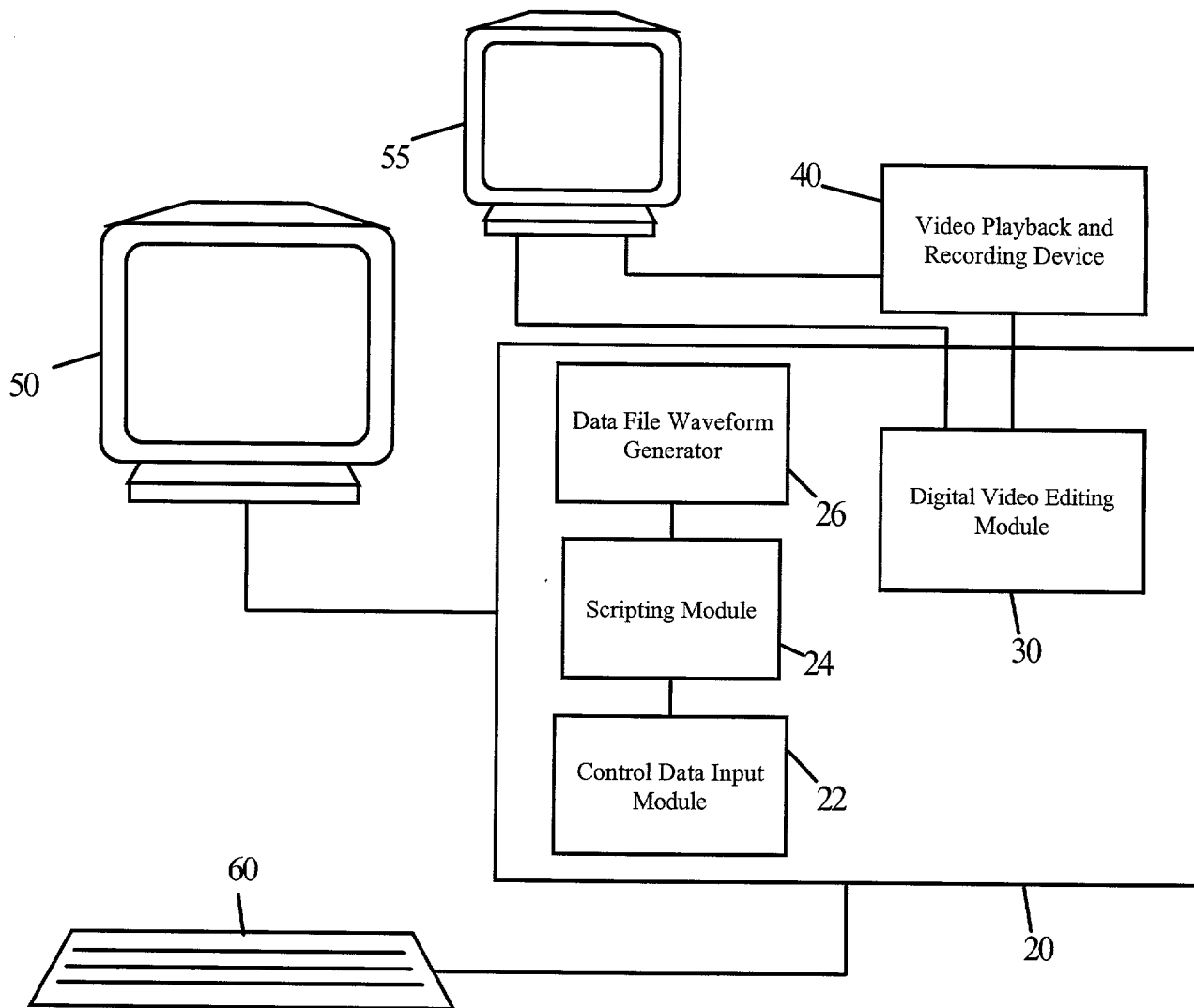


Figure 16

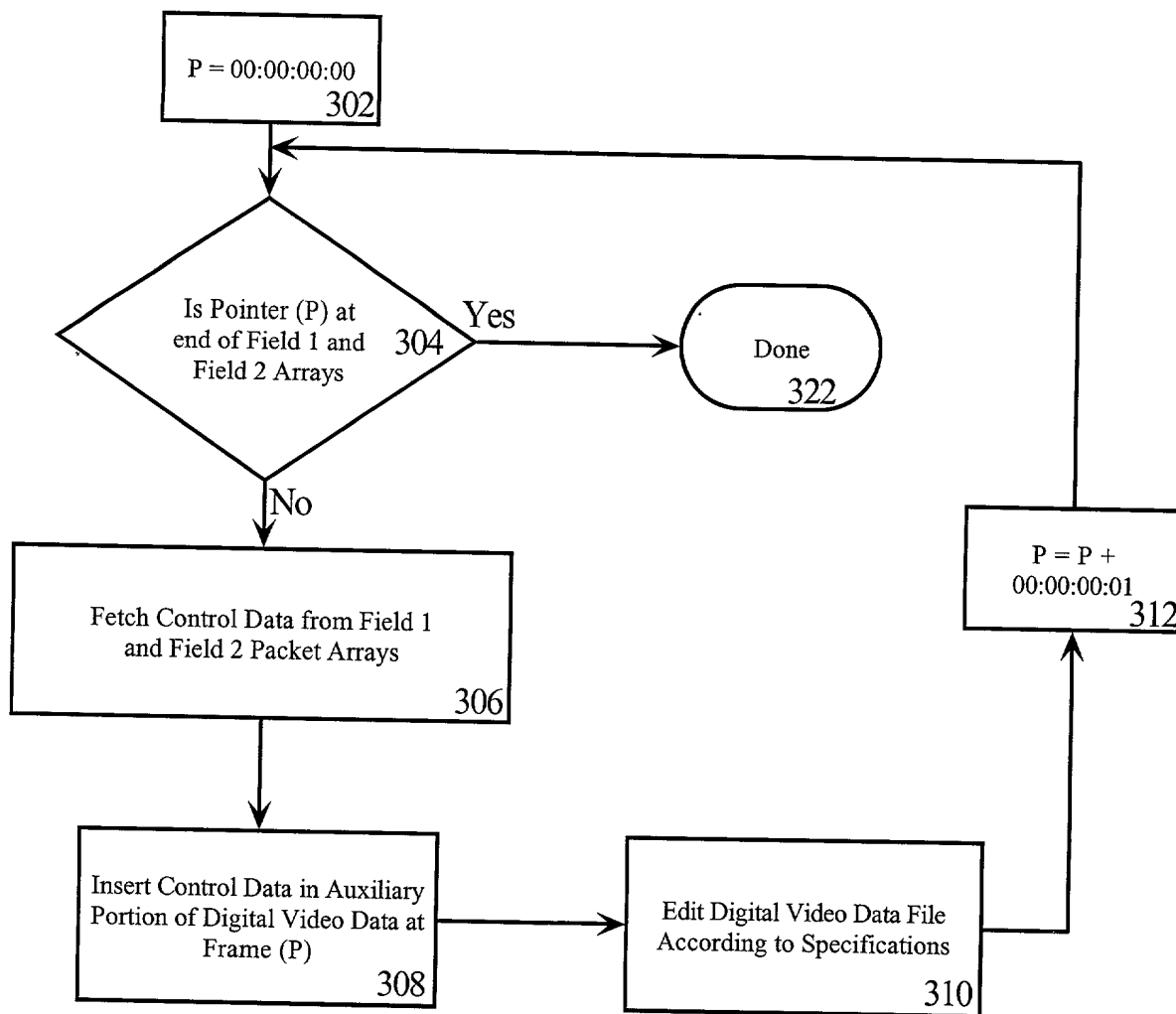


Figure 17

PATENT APPLICATION

**DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY
FOR PATENT APPLICATION**

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. 6425/53530

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence/post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name;

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled:

Method and Apparatus for Encoding Control Data in a Video Data System

the specification of which is attached hereto unless the following box is checked:

() was filed on _____ as US Application Serial No. or PCT International Application
Number _____ and was amended on _____ (if applicable).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understood the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment(s) referred to above. I acknowledge the duty to disclose all information which is material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR 1.56.

Foreign Application(s) and/or Claim of Foreign Priority

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code Section 119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor(s) certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor(s) certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

COUNTRY	APPLICATION NUMBER	DATE FILED	PRIORITY CLAIMED UNDER 35 U.S.C. 119
			YES: _____ NO: _____
			YES: _____ NO: _____

Provisional Application

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code Section 119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below:

APPLICATION SERIAL NUMBER	FILING DATE
60/124,696	March 15, 1999

U.S. Priority Claim

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, Section 120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code Section 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56(a) which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

#	APPLICATION SERIAL NUMBER	FILING DATE	STATUS(patented/pending/abandoned)

POWER OF ATTORNEY:

As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) listed below, with full power of substitution and revocation, to prosecute this application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith.

Virginia H. Meyer, Reg. No. 30089

Mark J. Spolyar, Reg. No. 42164

Send Correspondence to:

Direct Telephone Calls To:

Virginia H. Meyer, Esq.
Meyer Intellectual Property Law
475 Gate Five Road, Suite 275
Sausalito, CA 94965

Virginia H. Meyer
(415) 289-7471

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Full Name of Inventor: Jeffrey A. Schriebman

Residence: 3 Poco Paso Street, San Rafael, CA 94903

Citizenship: United States of America

Post Office Address: P.O. Box 4189, San Rafael, CA 94913

Jeffrey A. Schriebman
Inventor's Signature

3/8/00
Date